

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed January 15, 2002, the present application has been carefully reviewed and amended. Entry of the present amendment and reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 3, the only claim rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, has been amended as suggested by the Examiner and is thus believed to comply with 35 U.S.C. §112.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102/103

Claims 5-7, 9, 12-14 and 16-26

Claims 5-7, 9, 12-14 and 16-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over Ford, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,545,488) as evidenced by Cook (U.S. Patent No. 6,024,906).

Examiner Uhlir asserts the initial limitation that the coating be formed from a colliquefied power is treated as a product by process limitation and not given any limiting value. (Paper 8, Page 4)

Further, Examiner Uhlir relies upon Ford to disclose a color extruded strip forming a composite door seal and static edge trim (carrier portion) wherein a seal portion is extruded from EPDM. The examiner further relies upon Ford to disclose that the static edge portion is formed of a colored plastic material. (Paper 8, Page 5)

Claim 5

As amended, independent Claim 5 recites in part “a substrate having a first portion formed of a first polymeric material and a second portion formed of a different second polymeric material and a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion.”

Neither Cook nor Ford disclose or suggest a powder coating. Specifically, as set forth in Ford, the spray coating consist of a two-component material, wherein one component is a mixture of a branched hydroxyl-bearing polyester and a hydroxyl-bearing polyacrylate dissolved in aromatic hydrocarbon and aliphatic ester solvents, in which coloring pigments and fluorocarbon polymers are suspended. (Ford, Col. 3, Lines 14-20) In Cook, the thermoplastic material is melted and extruded. (Cook, Col. 3, Lines 55-57)

Therefore, neither reference discloses or suggest a powder coating on a weatherseal. As none of the cited references disclose or suggest the use of a powder coating, applicant respectfully submits the rejection of Claim 5 has been overcome.

Claims 6, 7 and 9 depend from Claim 5 and include all limitations thereof, thus, these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Claims 12-14, 16-19

Dependent Claims 12-14 and 16-19 depend from independent Claim 10 and recite in part “a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion of the weatherseal body.”

Neither Cook nor Ford disclose or suggest a powder coating on the first portion or the second portion of the weatherseal body. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits the references cannot sustain the asserted rejection.

Claim 20

Claim 20 recites in part “a heat fusible powder coating on at least a portion of the base and the resilient sealing portion.”

Neither of the cited references disclose or suggest a heat fusible powder coating. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits amended Claim 20 overcomes the asserted rejection.

Claims 21, 22 and 25 have been cancelled.

The remaining claims depending from Claim 20, Claims 23, 24 and 26, include all the limitations of independent Claim 20 and thus are in condition for allowance.

Claims 10 and 11

Independent Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by or in the alternative under 35 U.S.C. §103 as obvious over Cook.

As amended, Claim 10 recites in part, “a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion of the weatherseal body.”

As Cook does not disclose or suggest a powder coating (rather Cook discloses an extrusion), applicant respectfully submits the outstanding rejection of Claim 10 has been overcome.

As Claim 11 depends from Claim 10 and includes all limitations thereof, Claim 11 is also in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-4, 8 and 15

Claims 1-4, 8 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Ford as evidenced by Cook in view of Chihara, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,115,007). Examiner Uhlir again treated the prior limitation of a “colliquefied powder” as a product by process limitation.

As amended, Claim 1 recites in part, “a heat fusible powder coating on a portion of the metal reinforcing member and the resilient polymeric body.”

None of the references disclose or suggest a powder coating; a heat fusible powder coating or a heat fusible powder coating on a portion of a metal reinforcing member and a resilient polymeric body.

The absence of at least these limitations precludes the asserted combination from sustaining the outstanding rejection of Claim 1.

As Claims 2-3 depend from Claim 1 and include all limitations thereof, these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 8

Claim 8 depends from Claim 5 and includes the limitation of “a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion.”

Again, as neither of the cited references disclose or suggest a powder coating, Claim 8 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 15

Claim 15 depends from claim 10 and thus recites in part, “a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion of the weatherseal body.” As the powder coating is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references, applicant respectfully submits Claim 15 is in condition for allowance.

New Claims

Claims 33-65 have been added, wherein Claims 35, 40, 42, 44, 50, 56 and 61 are independent claims. These claims recite the following limitations, which are neither suggested nor disclosed in the cited references, specifically, “a heat fusible powder coating on the first portion (formed of a first polymeric material) and the second portion (formed of a different second polymeric material)” (Claims 35-39); “A powder coating on a portion of the reinforcing member in the polymeric body” (Claims 40-41); “a heat fusible powder coating on the first portion (formed of a first material) and the second portion (formed of a different second material) of the weatherseal body” (Claims 42-43); “a heat fusible powder coating on at least a portion of a surface of the thermoplastic weatherseal body” (Claims 44-49); “a thermoplastic weatherseal body, and a powder coating on at least a portion of a surface of the thermoplastic weatherseal body” (Claims 50-55); “a thermoset weatherseal body and a heat fusible thermosetting powder coating on at least a portion of the thermoset weatherseal body” (Claims 56-59); and “a thermoset

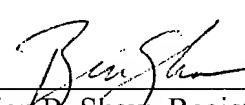
weatherseal body and a thermosetting powder coating on at least a portion of the thermoset weatherseal body" (Claims 61-65).

None of the cited references disclose or suggest the recited powder coating or heat fusible powder coating on the weatherseal. The reference in a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement January 7, 2002 (WO 01/85482) is expressly directed to a single material thermoset substrate on which a thermoplastic powder coating is applied. In contrast, the present claims either recite a substrate of two different materials or the use of a thermoplastic powder coating.

Applicant filed the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement January 7, 2002 and respectfully requests acknowledgement of such submission.

Therefore, applicant respectfully submits all the pending claims, Claims 1-20, 23, 24, 26, and 33-65 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited. If, however, the examiner feels any further issues remain he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned so that such matters may be promptly resolved.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

1. (Twice Amended) An automotive weatherseal, comprising:
 - (a) a resilient [elastomeric] polymeric body;
 - (b) a metal reinforcing member connected to the body; and
 - (c) [(b)] a [colliquefied] heat fusible powder coating [forming a contiguous surface film] on a portion of the metal reinforcing member and the resilient [elastomeric] polymeric body[, the surface film having a thickness less than 0.2 mm].
2. (Once Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 1, wherein the resilient [elastomeric] polymeric body includes a trim portion and a sealing portion.
3. (Twice Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 1, [wherein] further comprising a quantity of powder coating to form a [the] surface film of fused powder coating having [has] a thickness less than [between approximately 0.05 mm and] 0.2 mm.
4. (Twice Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 1, wherein the metal [further comprising a metallic] reinforcing member is partially covered by the polymeric body[connected to the resilient body].
5. (Twice Amended) An automotive weatherseal, comprising:
 - (a) a substrate having a first portion formed of a first [elastomeric] polymeric material and a second portion formed of a different second [elastomeric] polymeric material; and
 - (b) a powder coating on [colliquefaction forming a contiguous surface layer bonded to] the first portion and the second portion.
6. (Twice Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 5, wherein the first [elastomeric] polymeric material is a thermoset material and the second [elastomeric] polymeric material is a thermoplastic material.
7. The automotive weatherseal of Claim 5, further comprising a metallic reinforcing member connected to one of the first portion or the second portion.

8. (Twice Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 5, wherein [the] a colliquefaction of the powder coating has a thickness between [approximately] 0.05 mm and 0.2 mm.

9. (Twice Amended) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 5, wherein the powder coating [colliquefaction] is a thermoset material and the second [elastomeric] polymeric material is a thermoplastic material.

10. (Twice Amended) A weatherseal comprising:

(a) [a] a weatherseal body having a first portion formed of a first material and a second portion formed of a different second material; and

(b) [colliquefaction of] a powder coating on the first portion and the second portion of the weatherseal body [defining a contiguous surface film on a resilient elastomeric portion of the weatherseal].

11. The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating includes a thermoset and a thermoplastic material.

12. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating includes a thermoplastic material and the first portion is a thermoset material [colliquefaction is a thermoset material and the weatherseal includes a thermoplastic portion bonded to the colliquefaction].

13. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, further comprising a metallic-reinforcing member connected to the weatherseal body.

14. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the first portion is a thermoset material, and the second portion is a thermoplastic material [further comprising a thermoplastic portion and a thermoset portion, and the colliquefaction is bonded to the thermoplastic portion and the thermoset portion].

15. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating is selected to form a colliquefied layer having [colliquefaction has] a thickness less than 0.2 mm.

16. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, further comprising a metallic-reinforcing member having a U-shaped cross sectional profile connected to the weatherseal body.

17. (Once Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating is selected to form a contiguous colliquefaction [is continuous].

18. (Twice Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating [the colliquefaction] is located to form a sealing surface.

19. (Twice Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 10, wherein the powder coating is selected to form a colliquefaction [has] having a gloss appearance.

20. (Twice Amended) A weatherseal for sealing an interface between two confronting surfaces in an automotive vehicle, the weatherseal comprising;

(a) a[n] [elastomeric] polymeric base formed of a first material;

(b) a resilient sealing portion for contacting one of the confronting surfaces, the resilient sealing portion formed of a different second material; and

(c) a heat fusible powder coating on at least a portion of the base and the resilient sealing portion [colliquefaction of a powder coating forming a contiguous surface film on one of the base and the sealing portion].

Please cancel Claim 21. The weatherseal of Claim 20, wherein the surface film is on the sealing portion.

Please cancel Claim 22. The weatherseal of Claim 20, wherein the sealing portion is elastomeric and the surface film is on the sealing portion.

23. (Twice Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 20, wherein the base includes a trim portion and the heat fusible powder coating [colliquefaction] is located on the trim portion.

24. The weatherseal of Claim 20, further comprising a metallic reinforcing member in the base.

Please cancel Claim 25. The weatherseal of Claim 20, wherein the colliquefaction is bonded to the one of the base and the sealing portion to preclude non-destructive separation.

26. (Twice Amended) The weatherseal of Claim 20, wherein the base further comprises a trim portion formed of a different material than the sealing portion, and the heat fusible powder coating [colliquefaction] is on [bonded to] the trim portion.

Please cancel Claim 27. A method of forming a surface film on a portion of a weatherseal, comprising:

(a) creating an electric potential between the portion of the weatherseal and powder coating;

(b) exposing the powder coating to the electric potential to attach the powder coating to the portion of the weatherseal; and

(c) melting the powder coating on the portion of the weatherseal to form a contiguous surface layer on the portion of the weatherseal.

Please cancel Claim 28. The method of Claim 28, further comprising employing a thermosetting material in the powder coating.

Please cancel Claim 29. A method of forming a surface film on a weatherseal, comprising:

(a) forming a resilient body about an electrically conductive member;

(b) exposing the electrically conductive member to an electrical potential to form a surface charge on the resilient body;

(c) exposing the surface charge on the resilient body to an oppositely charged powder coating to attract the powder coating to the resilient body; and

(d) melting the powder coating on the resilient body to form a contiguous surface layer bonded to the body.

Please cancel Claim 30. A method of forming a contiguous surface film on a weatherseal, comprising:

(a) retaining a powder coating on the weatherseal; and

(b) colliquefying the retained powder coating to form a contiguous surface film.

Please cancel Claim 31. The method of Claim 30, further comprising electrostatically retaining the powder coating on the weatherseal.

Please cancel Claim 32. The method of Claim 31, further comprising forming the weatherseal of a polymeric material.

Please add the following new claims:

33. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 1, wherein the trim portion is a thermoplastic material.

34. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 1, wherein the trim portion is a thermoset material.

35. (New) An automotive weatherseal, comprising:

- (a) a substrate having a first portion formed of a first polymeric material and a second portion formed of a different second polymeric material; and
- (b) a heat fusible powder coating on the first portion and the second portion.

36. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 35, wherein one of the first portion and the second portion forms a trim portion of the weatherseal.

37. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 35, further comprising a metal reinforcing member connected to one of first portion and the second portion.

38. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 35, wherein the substrate has a U shaped cross section.

39. (New) The automotive weatherseal of Claim 35, wherein the substrate includes a metal reinforcing member.

40. (New) A weatherseal for an automotive vehicle, comprising:

- (a) a polymeric body;
- (b) a metal reinforcing member connected to the body, one of the body and the reinforcing member selected to engage the automotive vehicle; and
- (c) a powder coating on a portion of the reinforcing member and the polymeric body.

41. (New) The weatherseal of Claim 40, wherein the polymeric body includes a trim portion.

42. (New) A weatherseal comprising:

- (a) a weatherseal body having a first portion formed of a first material and a second portion formed of a different second material; and
- (b) a heat fusible powder coating on the first portion and the second portion of the weatherseal body.

43. (New) The weatherseal of Claim 42, wherein the weatherseal body includes a trim portion.

44. (New) A vehicle weatherseal, comprising:

- (a) a thermoplastic weatherseal body, and
- (b) a heat fusible powder coating on at least a portion of a surface of the thermoplastic weatherseal body.

45. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 44, wherein the thermoplastic weatherseal body includes a sealing portion and trim portion, and the heat fusible power coating is on at least one of the sealing portion and the trim portion.

46. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 45, wherein one of the trim portion and the sealing portion has a lower density than a remaining one of the trim portion and the sealing portion.

47. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 44, further comprising a reinforcing member in the thermoplastic weatherseal body.

48. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 47, wherein the reinforcing member is metal.

49. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 44, wherein the heat fusible powder coating includes one of a thermoplastic and thermoset material.

50. (New) A vehicle weatherseal, comprising:

- (a) a thermoplastic weatherseal body, and
- (b) a powder coating on at least a portion of a surface of the thermoplastic weatherseal body.

51. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 50, wherein the thermoplastic weatherseal body includes a sealing portion and trim portion, and the heat fusible power coating is on at least one of the sealing portion and the trim portion.

52. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 51, wherein one of the trim portion and the sealing portion has a lower density than a remaining one of the trim portion and the sealing portion.

53. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 50, further comprising a reinforcing member in the thermoplastic weatherseal body.

54. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 53, wherein the reinforcing member is metal.

55. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 50, wherein the powder coating includes one of a thermoplastic and thermoset material.

56. (New) A vehicular weatherseal, comprising:

(a) a thermoset weatherseal body; and

(b) a heat fusible thermosetting powder coating on at least a portion of the thermoset weatherseal body.

57. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 56, wherein the thermoset weatherseal body includes a sealing portion and trim portion, and the heat fusible power coating is on at least one of the sealing portion and the trim portion.

58. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 57, wherein one of the trim portion and the sealing portion has a lower density than a remaining one of the trim portion and the sealing portion.

59. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 58, further comprising a reinforcing member in the thermoset weatherseal body.

60. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 59, wherein the reinforcing member is metal.

61. (New) A vehicular weatherseal, comprising:

(a) a thermoset weatherseal body; and

(b) a thermosetting powder coating on at least a portion of the thermoset weatherseal body.

62. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 61, wherein the thermoset weatherseal body includes a sealing portion and trim portion, and the thermosetting power coating is on at least one of the sealing portion and the trim portion.

63. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 62, wherein one of the trim portion and the sealing portion has a lower density than a remaining one of the trim portion and the sealing portion.
64. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 61, further comprising a reinforcing member in the thermoset weatherseal body.
65. (New) The vehicular weatherseal of Claim 64, wherein the reinforcing member is metal.